The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 20, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912.
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1724 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 17

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

The other day we had a chat with an Army General, an old-timer well versed in matters journalistic as well as military.

This General sought to assure us that the Army's attitude toward labor is basicly friendly and sympathetic.

Furthermore, he advised us not to get too excited about reports that the soldiers in the ranks are unduly hostile to labor. He insisted these reports are not true.

"A soldier isn't happy unless he's got something to beef about," said the General. "Of course, during the coal strikes, the boys got all het up about John L. Lewis. They still are to some extent.

"But as far as labor unions generally and the American workers as a whole are concerned, they need not worry about what the average soldier thinks about them. He thinks they are doing a good job in supplying him with the weapons of war and in helping to defeat the enemy. The soldiers know that American labor and American industry have won the battle of war production. That knowledge makes them more confident than ever that they're going to win in the actual fighting and that they are going to come back home safely."

What Is Labor News?

These words were highly encouraging to us. But then the General added a footnote. He said:

"Besides, there has been so little labor news in the last few months that the soldiers are forgetting about labor and beefing about something else by now."

That remark made us sit up and take notice. We asked:

"What do you mean there has been no labor news?"

"Well," he replied, "there's been very little in the papers about strikes recently."

That's where we sounded off. The idea that labor news consists only of strikes is one of our pet hates. It is an idea fostered by the newspapers which seldom give labor news any prominence unless it is destructive in nature. News and trouble seem to be synonomous with most editors. According to this type of reasoning, happy marriages do not constitute news; divorce does. Compliance with the law is not news; crime is.

As earnestly as we could, we tried to convince the General that the paucity of strikes in the past few months constitutes a most constructive and important labor news story for the Army and the millions of soldiers who read its publications.

Somewhat shamefacedly, the General agreed. And one of his aides, who participated in the conference, hastened to show us the material being prepared for the forthcoming May 1 issue of the Army's Newsmap which is displayed on all camp bulletin-boards and is seen by practically every soldier in the ranks. This newsmap is going to tell the story of war production and tell it in forthright language, acknowledging the fact that the success of the war production program is due primarily to the hard work of American labor.

A Soldier Writes

In addition to these heartening developments, we received the assurance that the War Department would cooperate with us in efforts to make copies of the American Federationist, the AFL's aggressive monthly magazine, available at camp libraries and Army schools for those interested in learning labor's point of view on war and post-war problems.

And then, when we returned from the Pentagon Building to the office, we found on our desk a letter sent to AFL President Green by a first-class Army private, stationed in Italy, named Thomas E. Coll.

PFC Coll stated bluntly in his letter that "only a few stupid fellows" in the Army "are misled by the plain bunk we get about the labor situation in America." He also inclosed a letter to the editor of the Pittsburgh Press from which we quote the following excerpts:

"If we believed what we read, we would think that the American working men and women—our own families and friends—stay up nights figuring out ways to lose the war. Personally, I think the news we get and the pictures they send us are downright insults to our intelligence.

"The overseas soldier will not be influenced to bitterness by anti-labor bunk. We need you as much as you need us. To win the war we must all work together.

"We are also aware of the sacrifices the workmen and women are making on the home front. We are proud of all you are doing. The little Army and Navy "E" pin you wear in your lapel is as much a symbol of your unselfishness and duty as the various ribbons the soldier wears above his left pocket. Remember that!"

We'd like to get lots of letters like that every day.

Green Pledges Aid To Italian Labor

Washington, D. C.—In a cablegram to the newly reorganized Italian Confederation of Labor, AFL President William Green pledged that American workers will render "all moral and material aid" to efforts of the workers of Italy to "reconstitute a bona fide free trade union movement." The message said:

"Without a free trade union movement, the long-suffering Italian people will be unable to reconstruct a sound economy and enjoy the benefits and freedom of democracy as well as a just peace as provided for in the Atlantic Charter.

"In this spirit, the AFL is giving full support to the energetic campaign in behalf of free trade unions in Italy launched by the Italian-American Labor Council headed by Luigi Antonini.

"The AFL rejoices in having the liberty-loving Italian laboring people as comrades-in-arms battling alongside of us for victory over our hated common enemy—the Axis powers. We are proud of the inspiring leadership Italian labor has given its nation in overthrowing the Mussolini dictatorship. We are thrilled by the great mass strikes which the workers of Northern Italy have been waging so heroically against the mailed fist of the barbaric German invader and despicable quislings. We are confident that once all Italy is freed from the yoke of all foreign domination and all remnants of domestic tyranny, the Italian workers will rebuild a powerful trade union movement which will resume its place of honor in the democratic international labor movement."

LABOR'S AID TO HOUSING PRAISED BY EMMERICH

St. Louis.—Organized labor has put over the top the biggest housing job in the history of the nation, Commissioner Herbert Emmerich of the Federal Public Housing Authority revealed here at the annual meeting of the National Public Housing Conference.

The FPHA, said Emmerich, has built 630,000 dwelling units for war workers and their families—more homes than are found in Los Angeles, Detroit or Philadelphia. During the year 1943 American workers built 371,000 war homes, more than half of the total program.

"Labor cooperated splendidly," Emmerich said. "There has been no instance where a general strike stopped construction of projects under FPHA jurisdiction. In 1943 less than one-third of 1% of the total man-hours on FPHA projects was lost because of strikes."

ROSE SCHNEIDERMAN RESIGNS LABOR POST

New York City.—Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi announced that he had accepted with regret the resignation of Miss Rose Schneiderman as secretary of the State Labor Department after seven years in office. The resignation is effective May 1.

Miss Schneiderman said she would give her time to the president of the New York Women's Trade Union League, of which she has been the head for twenty-six years. She said she would devote herself especially to labor legislation and the enforcement of laws protecting working women.

RESTAURANT WORKERS ENDORSE ROOSEVELT

Milwaukee, Wis. — The general executive board of the Hotel and Restaurant Employes International Alliance and the Bartenders' International League of America (AFL) announced it had unanimously gone on record favoring a fourth term for President Roosevelt.

The board also called on its 825 locals to take similar action and engage actively in the campaign to have Roosevelt reelected.

NAVY OFFERS MOVIES TO LOCAL AFL UNIONS

Washington, D. C. — Official combat movies taken by Navy, Marine, Army and Coast Guard cameramen and especially prepared for "restricted" showings to war workers and their families in plants and at union meetings are now available at a nominal charge to local unions.

Among the notable films which can be obtained for such showings are "Battle For The Beaches," picturing amphibious warfare from Dieppe to the Marshalls; "December Seventh," which shows the bombing and rebuilding of Pearl Harbor, and "The Life And Death of The Hornet," a saga of a famous fighting ship.

To obtain these films, secretaries of local unions are advised to write to the Industrial Incentive Division, U. S. Navy, 2118 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D. C.

Roosevelt Calls On ILO To Draft World Social And Economic Security

Philadelphia.—President Roosevelt, in a message to the opening session of the International Labor Organization, declared that "the conditions of a lasting peace can be secured only through soundly organized economic institutions fortified by humane labor standards, regular employment and adequate income for all the people."

The President's emphasis on the economic basis of world peace, as read to the conference by Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, was warmly received by representatives of forty-one nations.

Walter Nash, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, elected as conference president, followed the keynote set by President Roosevelt and made a plea in behalf of an ILO program that would "maximize production" and free people all over the world from want.

A similar note was struck by Carter Goodrich, chairman of the governing body, who called the meeting to order. He said that the concern of the ILO is to see that the conditions under which men live and work are given primary attention.

The President's message and the speeches which followed laid the basis for proposals to broaden the scope of ILO which will be discussed within the next three weeks.

"The determination on the part of its member states that the ILO should continue its activities during the war years is evidence of the indestructible tenacity of the democratic way of life, Mr. Roosevelt asserted.

"The tasks you are undertaking, even at the moment when the tide of war is mounting, bear testimony to the fact that the welfare of the world's population and their liberty are a first and an ultimate concern of those dedicated to root out from this earth every trace of Nazi ideas and Nazi methods."

The President mentioned the recommendations before the delegates, saying that in them "will lie the foundation of those agreements in the field of labor and social standards which must be part of any permanent arrangement for a decent world."

After referring to Secretary of State Hull's plans for an international organization to maintain peace, the President said he saw as part of such plans the ILO as "a permanent instrument of representative character for the formulation of international policy, on matters directly affecting the welfare of labor and for international collaboration in this field."

Robert J. Watt, American workers' delegate and international representative of the AFL, was unanimously elected Vice President of the conference.

Carpenters Will Take In Servicemen Without Payment of Initiation Fees

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor was notified that the Executive Board of the International Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners of America had directed all local unions of that organization to admit into membership without payment of an initiation fee any properly qualified serviceman honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States.

This is the second large affiliate of the AFL to take such action within recent weeks. The other was the International Association of Machinists. AFL President William Green has called upon all affiliated unions to follow their example.

The only condition made by the Carpenters Union was that application by servicemen for membership in the union must be made within one year of the date of discharge from the armed forces.

The union's Executive Board also established a uniform rule under which the international union, instead of the local unions, will assume responsibility for keeping the 75,000 members of the organization now in the armed forces in continued good standing as union members. This action was made retroactive to July 1, 1943.

The Executive Board also decided that the international union will make itself responsible for the payment of death and disability benefits for its members in the armed forces. This involves a considerable contingent liability, because if casualties among these members run as high as 10 per cent by the end of the war payments by the Brotherhood in death and disability benefits would exceed two million dollars.

Congress And Industry Reject Pleas For National Service Legislation

Washington, D. C.—Two crushing blows were dealt to the advocates of labor draft and national service legislation which organized labor strenuously opposes.

The House Military Affairs Committee, after extensive hearings and careful study of a sub-committee's report, decided to pigeon-hole all proposals for national service and labor battalions made up of 4-F's.

Immediately afterward, military leaders who sought to revive such proposals by enlisting the support of industry, were sharply rebuffed. Incensed by high-pressure methods of the military authorities, both the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce flatly repudiated the draft-labor plans.

Robert M. Gaylord, NAM president, said:

"The National Association of Manufacturers, made up of experienced managers of manufacturing, is opposed to national service legislation because it believes that compulsion of labor would be disastrous to production.

"The confusion that would result would upset the morale of American workers and would impair the production of capable men and women now doing a good job.

"The resulting production losses would more than offset any possible gains in mere numbers of workers.

"The American record of production has been made by industry working as free private enterprise with voluntary labor. It is a great record because men were encouraged rather than forced to work.

"Industry knows that the way to get production is to lead men, not to drive them. It wants no part of forced labor.

"Our supreme task is to win the war. The suggested action would, in our best judgment, so seriously impair production that our fighting men would be without enough tools for destruction of the enemy."

Eric Johnston, President of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, said:

"The membership of the chamber is on record against national service legislation. It holds that the imposition of a compulsory law upon the industrial workers of the nation would bring complications which actually may retard rather than advance the war program.

"At its last annual meeting the chamber's membership went on record as being opposed to use of compulsory methods unless or until voluntary methods had been tried and had failed. The magnificent industrial performance of the last two years does not support any implications of failure."

Informed of the renewed attempts of the War and Navy Departments and the Maritime Commission to drum up support for compulsory legislation, Chairman May of the House Military Affairs Committee said:

"We have spoken and we meant what we said. My committee made a report saying we do not need new legislation after hearing heads of the Government agencies involved. Just why they should wait until right after we have made our report before they make their recommendations is beyond me."

NLRB BANS ABSENTEE VOTE BY SERVICEMEN

Washington, D. C.—Veterans returning to their jobs will be given the opportunity to "affirm or change" the bargaining agent selected in their absence. The National Labor Relations Board made this declaration of policy in an election proceeding in which both the union and company asked that the Board permit absentee voting by all employes serving in the armed forces of the United States.

The Board recognized that employes on military leave retain their status as employes and, therefore, have a real interest in the choice of a bargaining representative. However, in light of the fact that those employes in uniform are scattered in various units throughout the world, administrative difficulties would make it virtually impossible to poll them, the board held.

NEW ADVISERS NAMED TO ILO CONFERENCE

Washington, D. C.—The White House announced appointment of three more labor advisers to the ILO conference at Philadelphia, in additional to those previously announced. The new appointees are H. W. Fraser, President of the Order of Railway Conductors, Bishop Francis J. Haas and Marion Hedges, research director of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Those named before include AFL President William Green, Secretary - Treasurer George Meany and Vice President Matthew Woll. The American workers' delegate to the conference is Robert J. Watt, international representative of the AFL.

News Briefs

WORKERS' VACATIONS ENDORSED BY NWLB

Washington, D. C.—Vacations as aids of war production were officially indorsed by the War Labor Board.

In a case involving the Fulton Iron Works, St. Louis, and the AFL Electrical Workers, Vice Chairman George W. Taylor wrote:

"It is our view that it is even more necessary during a war period than in normal times to provide reasonable vacation periods as an aid in securing maximum war production."

The regional WLB at Kansas City had ordered the company to grant a week's vacation to employes with one or more years service, and two weeks after five years service. The company objected to the two weeks and appealed to the national board. The board, with industry members dissenting, rejected the appeal last January. The company later petitioned for reconsideration. The board announced it unanimously rejected that petition.

APPRENTICE PROGRAM TO BE PRESERVED

Washington, D. C.—The WMC has issued instructions to all regional manpower directors emphasizing that its Apprentice Training Service will be preserved as an "organizational entity."

The American Federation of Labor was concerned lest the functions of the apprentice training service be integrated in the regional operations of the commission and its identity lost. The letter was written to the field to make clear that the apprentice training service will remain intact.

The apprentice training service, set up as a means of training skilled workers through apprenticeship, was authorized by act of Congress. It was transferred by executive order from the Department of Labor first to the Federal Security Agency, then to the War Manpower Commission, to serve a wartime function of providing trained workers to fill immediate manpower needs. It is attached to WMC's Bureau of Training. When the WMC is liquidated, officials pointed out, the apprentice training service will be continued by retransfer to a going agency.

UNION LEGIONNAIRES TO MEET IN CHICAGO

Chicago. — The National Conference of Union Labor Legionnaires, made up of almost a hundred union labor posts of the American Legion, will hold its annual meeting June 3-4 at the Sherman Hotel here, it was announced by Secretary George C. Danfield.

One of the most important subjects to be taken up at the meeting is opposition to National Commander Atherton's campaign for enactment of national service legislation, which, the union legionnaires contend, is not in conformity with the Legion's policy. Other problems up for consideration will be post-war programs for servicemen, anti-labor propaganda, American and national defense programs, education and child welfare.

T. J. ETZRODT DIES; PRESSMEN'S OFFICIAL

Philadelphia.—Thomas J. Etzrodt, 54, international representative of the Printing Pressmen's Union (AFL) here for the past 20 years, died April 16 in a hospital following a short illness.

A member of the first regional labor board under the NRA, he was appointed in 1938 to the Advisory Committee of the unemployment compensation division. At the time of his death he was an alternate member of the National War Labor Board's newspaper commission.

NEW SEAMEN'S CLUB OPENED IN BRITAIN

New York City.—An international radio hook-up from England, with Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labor, and U. S. Ambassador John G. Winant as principal speakers, marked the opening ceremonies of the third merchant seamen's club to be built in Britain through the contributions of American organized labor.

Situated in Cardiff, Wales, one of the busiest of British ports, this club will provide recreation, entertainment and other facilities to merchant sailors of all nations.

The Cardiff club is located within easy walking distance of the docks, the main railroad station, and the Ministry of Labor, where sleeping accommodations are available for merchant seamen. The club is well equipped and attractive, and has kitchens, a dining hall, reception and writing rooms, two billiard rooms and a bar. In addition, there is a large concert hall and ballroom. Dressing rooms and a stage have been provided so that the ballroom can also be used for theatrical presentations.

Green Asks 2-Year Extension of OPA; Warns of Post-War Price Dangers

AFL Chief Condemns Profiteers And Gougers Seeking To Wreck Price Control By Weakening Amendments

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green urged Congress to extend the Emergency Price Control Act for two years to protect consumers from war profiteering and post-war inflation.

Appearing before the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, Mr. Green warned of a post-war "danger zone" in which prices for the necessities of life may shoot sky-high, as after the last world war, unless strict Government controls are enforced.

Unless this is done, he said, American workers now investing a large part of their savings in War Bonds will not receive full value, dollar for dollar, when the war ends and the bonds are redeemed.

Mr. Green offered the following program for enactment:

1—Extension of the Price Control Act without change for two years after the war.

2—Congressional support of increased appropriation for effective enforcement of price and rent control.

3—Provision of subsidies essential to continued price stability of key cost of living commodities.

4—A restoration of the relationships between prices and wages which existed September 15, 1942, as absolutely essential to make the law work equitably and build the morale of American workers to the highest degree of efficiency.

The AFL chief continued:

"The issue before Congress involving the future of price control is now drawn. Gigantic pressures are at work to secure the emasculation of price control and to permit wartime profit gains through price increases at the expense of consumers—workers in industry and trade, white collar workers, farm workers and wives and dependents of soldiers at the front.

"The drive against continued price control does not take the form of open opposition to the price control itself. Every worker, every housewife, every soldier's wife is so deeply convinced that price control is necessary to protect the budget on which rests their livelihood that no enemy of price control has dared come out and attack it openly.

"Instead, the drive is on to make price control unworkable and ineffective through piecemeal technical changes, complicated enough to escape the understanding of the ordinary man on the street. Ineffective price control is worse than no price control at all. Price control which remains on the books but permits creeping price increases, or price control which is impossible of enforcement and understanding by every housewife and every consumer, would be nothing short of a gigantic fraud.

"It has been urged that price control would be broken up among a number of agencies in place of the single and coordinated controls now placed in the hands of OPA. This would breed chaos.

"There is a growing awareness on the part of wage earners throughout the nation that unimpaired continuation of price control is a matter of foremost importance to every wage earner. Witnesses from communities in different parts of the country, from the midwest, south and north will testify here directly on behalf of labor in their own cities and towns. These are not isolated examples and are not expressions of picked individuals."

Mr. Green then delivered a smashing attack upon the most flagrant war profiteers who have led the fight against continued and effective price control. He declared:

"Reasonable profit on investment is essential to the operation of business enterprise. Confiscatory administration of price control which denies a manufacturer, wholesaler or retailer his reasonable return would be strongly opposed by the American Federation of Labor. With this in mind, I must say in all fairness that during recent months the most publicized and most violent claims of undue hardship resulting from price ceilings have come from quarters in which wartime profiteering was most flagrant. At the same time specific instances indicate that requests for just and proper relief have resulted in speedy and satisfactory adjustment of OPA procedures and regulations.

"Labor cannot be silent about brazen wartime profiteering in all branches of industry and trade which is passed over in knowing silence in all public policy discussions of economic stabilization. Has not the Senate Investigating Committee headed by Senator Truman brought out the fact that while the bulk of war business has been given to 100 corporations, only 9 of these have been free of excessive profits in 1942? Has not the Truman Committee shown that for the remaining 91 corporations war profits reached all the way from 25 to 600 times normal peacetime profits?

"These and other reports on profits of war contractors speak for themselves. They are being dealt with through renegotiation procedures. Far more important is the fact that excessive profits are rapidly gaining in the production and distribution of civilian goods. When we consider the overall picture of corporate profits—and I don't mean, mind you, profits before taxes, I mean profits after taxes—we can readily understand why the Director of Economic Stabilization and other officials directing top policy have decided as a standard procedure that all corporate profit information in the hands of the government should be kept from the public through rigid censorship.

"It is a fact that reports on corporate profits compiled by the government for specific industries have been withheld from publication. This information had been gathered through public channels. The public is certainly entitled to have access to it. Could it be that those responsible for the top economic stabilization policies felt that mere publication of these facts would challenge the fairness of the overall economic stabilization policy, which leans so heavily on rigid wage control while evading many basic price and profit issues?"

The spokesman demanded full retention of the rent control program as part of the OPA. He denounced real estate interests seeking to wreck this program.

He informed the Senatorial Committee that the AFL, the CIO and the Railway Brotherhoods had joined in urging Congress to renew the Price Control Act without weakening amendments.

Other witnesses appearing at the public hearings for the AFL included Boris Shishkin, staff economist; Mrs. Mae Lowe, President of the American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries of Labor; Edward H. Weyler, Secretary of the Kentucky State Federation of Labor, and Joseph J. McComb, of Camden, N. J., representing the Retail Clerks' International Protective Association.

Executive Council Meets May 1

Philadelphia.—The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor will hold its Spring meeting here at the Adelphia Hotel beginning May 1.

The Council decided to come to this city because the International Labor Organization is in session here and several of the top AFL officials are serving as advisers at the ILO conference.

Furthermore it is expected that the Executive Council may take advantage of the opportunity to act immediately in support of some of the major recommendations of the ILO meeting on the establishment of conditions making for world security and lifting of labor standards.

The Executive Council will devote most of its two-week session to the consideration of policies designed to help America and the United Nations win the war in the shortest possible time.

It is also expected that the Council will seek to strengthen and implement the non-partisan political policy of the Federation in the coming national campaign.

THIS UNION FAMILY REALLY GOES TO WAR

Providence, R. I. — You don't need to tell John A. White "there's a war on."

White, who is business representative of Hoisting and Portable Engineers Local 57, International Union of Operating Engineers (AFL), has five sons and two brothers in the armed services and all five of his sons are members of Local 57.

Two of the sons, John and Charles, are in the Navy. The other three, Ray, Robert, and Daniel, are in the Army. The business representative's two brothers also are with the Army overseas. Another brother, Daniel A. White, is secretary-treasurer of the Rhode Island State Federation of Labor.

FORRESTAL PRAISES LABOR WAR RECORD

Washington, D. C.—Labor's part in the war effort was extolled by Under-Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, who said that "since the Summer of 1940 we have built a sea and air power of such proportions as the world has never seen and literally never dreamed of."

He quoted figures to show the tremendous job performed by labor.

During 1940 a total of 245 combat planes were produced for the naval air service; during 1943 the figure skyrocketed to 13,500 combat planes, and Forrestal predicted that the number would rise to 28,000 planes for the Navy during 1944.

In the matter of ships, Forrestal said 29 combatant vessels were completed during 1940; last year the number was 668 and this year 581 fighting ships will be completed.

"This nation at the end of 1944 will have naval power and accompanying air power to go with it, to match the naval forces of the rest of the world," the Under Secretary said.